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Why Women Should Support Union Government



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"God Almighty hates a quitter." To the extent of the Divine spark in every woman, every woman hates a quitter. To-day, throughout the world, there is a feeling of profound contempt for the people of Russia because they have quit the war. Even the broadest minded citizen desiring to make allowance for a people, long enslaved and drunk with liberty turned to licence, cannot overcome a feeling of profound contempt for Russia's broken pledge to her Allies. What then will be the world verdict on Canada if she joins hands with Russia and quits the war?

To return Sir Wilfrid Laurier to power is to quit the war. Let no woman be deceived. Once enthroned at Ottawa, Sir Wilfrid will suspend the Military Act, a leisurely process of taking a referendum of the people will be discussed, but no active campaign to carry on and win the war will be adopted, moreover, it is highly questionable if the men now at the front, will receive just attention from a Government pledged, secretly, if not openly, to get out of the war as fast as possible.

Any lingering doubt as to the position of Sir Wilfrid Laurier has been dispelled by the open support of Bourassa.

For many years, Sir Wilfrid has been a heroic figure to the women of Canada, a "White Knight." Men have accused women of not really valuing purity of life, because they have admitted men of doubtful character to their homes. This, alas, is true, but in spite of this inconsistency, deep in the heart of every good woman is an altar to the "pure in manhood." Sir Wilfrid Laurier typified purity of life and manhood, and women of widely differing political and religious views have not only admired him, but have accepted his leadership. It is bitter to dethrone a hero; it hurts our pride; it seems that we have judged wrongly—our idol has feet of clay.

There need, however, be no bitterness in the present necessity of forsaking the leadership of Sir Wilfrid Laurier; he has not failed as a "White Knight,"—that claim to heroism remains, though, alas, he has failed lamentably in a realization of his duty and Canada's at the present crisis in the world's liberty. A leader who fails in a crisis is a leader no longer and still to follow him would be to share in his recreancy.

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Canada's honor has been pledged, by her Government, to the prosecution of this war "to the last man and to the last dollar." It is idle to say that Sir Robert Borden had no right to make that pledge; he had a right to make it, the right of being in power by the will of the people of Canada. He made it; and his decision was validated by the spontaneous outburst of public sentiment by the formal approval of the Canadian parliament. The people of Canada must now stand back of it until the pledge is redeemed, or else be content to accept a position in the eyes of the world lower than that occupied by Russia to-day. It does not excuse Russia for failing to make good the pledge of the Romanoffs, how infinitely less will the world excuse Canada for failing to make good the pledge of a Government representative of her own people.

Absolutely the only way in which the pledge can now be redeemed is to support, with every resource in our power, a Union Government.

"The Union Government should have been formed the first year of the war," you say. Certainly it should, but "better late than never." The past is past, its lost opportunities cannot be regained; but the nation's pledge remains, and must be fulfilled. There is a chance for the Union Government now. Therefore, push for it to the utmost of your ability, never forgetting for an hour that the honor of Canada is at stake.

Quite as binding as the pledge of Canada to Britain and the Allies, is her pledge to every man, who voluntarily risked his life in the cause for freedom. If possible more binding, for it was made month after month, as the battalions moved away; not by the Government, but by ourselves, as those who, unable to go in person, declared their willingness to support, by every means in their power, those who did go. That pledge was made in ringing periods from platforms; it was made equally in the last handshake that every woman gave a soldier. Think of the thousands of boys under the sod in France and Flanders, who died in the faith of that pledge; and there will be no holding back from supporting Union Government, a government pledged first, last and all time to the prosecution of the war, and the relief of the boys now at the front.

No woman can honestly sing—

"God save our splendid men,
Bring them safe home again—"

if she fails to support the Union Government with all that it implies.

It seems hardly worth mentioning the duty of all Canadian womanhood to the suffering women and little children overseas. If honor of country and faith with our own men fails to bring support, the thought of the women in France and Flanders who have suffered the unspeakable Hun, and the terror of the women of England of a Hun invasion, should stir at least the instinct of self-preservation. The fate of the women of France and Flanders will be ours, with the especial hate for the Anglo-Saxon added, if for lack of men and food, the Bosch is allowed to triumph in this war.

Germany has for years coveted Canada. She hoped to get it easily. She is full of unspeakable hatred to Canada because she has supported Britain. Picture to yourselves the fate of Canadian women if the Huns ever set foot in Canada. THEN REMEMBER, OH, REMEMBER THAT SUCH A THING IS NOT AN IMPOSSIBILITY.

"If the Union Government wants support from women, why have not all women received votes?" A pregnant question truly. There are many reasons, and they are mainly such as cannot be printed without stirring racial and religious prejudices, and this is no time to stir up either; but in the hope that it may help some women to walk by faith and not by sight, here is one woman's stand:—

"Having for 27 years, by voice and pen, striven for a vote for women; being to-day disfranchised by the accident of being without male relatives; knowing the conditions in western Canada intimately and thoroughly, I am satisfied, that in confining the votes of women to those with men in the war, the Government of Canada did the best thing under the circumstances, and accept their ruling without question, and to the utmost of my limited ability I accord the Union Government my support."

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